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BANCROFT AVENUE Baptist Church

LYNN E. HODGES, Pastor

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August 8, 1977

Prime Minister Forbes Burnham
Government Buildings
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Georgetown, Guyana

Honorable Sir:

I have been asked to write a letter concerning the status of the People's Temple in San Francisco and its pastor, the Rev. Jim Jones. I am glad to do this because of my deep respect for these splendid people.

For the past 5 years I served as the Executive Minister of the Northern California Ecumenical Council and the San Francisco Council of Churches before recently becoming the pastor of this parish and retaining only part of the responsibilities that are related to ecumenical work. During this time I have had many opportunities to work with and observe Jim Jones and his people. In every instance they displayed an enormous amount of integrity and commitment to the poor and the oppressed. I can only wish that all churches did as much to help those who need help.

As this letter is written, part of the media in the San Francisco area is attacking the credibility of People's Temple and their pastor. They are quoting some disgruntled former members who were asked to leave the congregation or who chose to leave because of differences of opinion. I have seen no evidence that the accusations being made are true and I do not expect any proof to be forthcoming. At this point it would appear that a conspiracy has formed for the purpose of hurting the ministry of People's Temple.

I have heard good things about the agricultural project that People's Temple is associated with in your country. And I have heard Rev. Jones speak very highly of Guyana on several occasions. I hope that this relationship shall continue to flourish and be beneficial to all.

Very sincerely yours,

Lynn E. Hodges, pastor